

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the efforts of an Erie County-based food bank to combat childhood hunger across northwestern Pennsylvania, especially in several counties of Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District.

In 2011, the Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest Pennsylvania launched its backpack program, which enlists the help of volunteers to fill backpacks with enough meals and snacks to help feed children over the weekends of each school year.

Over this past weekend, around 70 volunteers, including residents, teachers, and businessowners from Warren County gathered to supply backpacks to around 350 students in the Warren County School District. The backpacks are expected to last those second and third grade students through the end of the year.

In Erie County, around 1,100 students benefit from the program in the Erie County School District with meals being distributed to children throughout its 15 elementary schools.

Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that a program such as this is necessary, but I am proud that there are folks in the Pennsylvania Fifth Congressional District and the surrounding area who are willing to help step up to the plate for kids in need.

NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY

(Mr. HONDA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the 226 million Americans who are eligible to vote and to recognize September 27 as National Voter Registration Day.

However, this year is different. With the recent attacks on our democracy, unscrupulous actors seek to gain access to confidential and sensitive information and distort the outcome of elections.

In Arizona, the secretary of state just took offline its voter registration database because of credible threats to its system. In Illinois, 15 million records were recently exposed and nearly 200,000 accessed by hackers. The Russian Government hacked the Democratic Party's emails and files in an attempt to distort our elections.

Our elections should be free of foreign influence. As the representative for Silicon Valley, I value technology in our democracy. That is why I introduced legislation to declare our election technology as critical infrastructure, so we can give local and State officials the Federal resources they need to protect our votes and the purity of our democracy.

On this National Voter Registration Day, too much is on the line for us not to act.

RECOGNIZING KU CHANCELLOR BERNADETTE GRAY-LITTLE

(Mr. YODER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, as a proud Jayhawk, I rise today to recognize a great leader for the State of Kansas who has made a positive impact on the lives of many fellow Kansans—KU Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little.

Last week, Chancellor Gray-Little announced her retirement in 2017, and I wanted to recognize some of the major accomplishments during her tenure at KU.

From day one, she set aggressive goals through her Bold Aspirations initiative to advance the university into the 21st century as a leader in education and research. It was a great success, leading to KU being designated as a National Cancer Institute and working towards a Comprehensive Cancer Center designation. The KU Alzheimer's Disease Center also received national designation from the National Institute on Aging.

As someone who utilized both student loans and Pell grants, I was greatly appreciative of her vocal support for these programs to help every student achieve their dreams regardless of income level.

Today, on behalf of the United States Congress, I would like to thank Chancellor Gray-Little for her leadership and service to our beloved Jayhawk community and wish her and her husband, Shade, well in their next endeavors.

Rock Chalk, Jayhawks.

VETERAN SUICIDE CRISIS

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, I am holding here in my hand a wristband that was given to me over this weekend. It says: "22 every day." Unfortunately, shamefully, this is in reference to the number of veterans that commit suicide in this country every day.

There are many reasons, but one of the reasons it should not be is that, A, they could not get through on a telephone call to somebody at the VA; or that they had given up hope that they were going to have their needs met after the promise that was made to them wasn't kept because they could not get what they needed for their health care and for other benefits that were promised them as being members of our military.

So my hat is off to AMVETS and many other folks, including people out there on social media, that are dedicated to doing 22 push-ups a day to get awareness up amongst their friends for the loss of approximately 22 veterans per day on suicide.

We have to get our act together here and pass legislation to make sure they

at least will get their phone calls answered, especially at a time of crisis like that, when they are contemplating perhaps a suicide.

Mr. Speaker, this needs to be done soon and with the dedication that they have given to us.

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AMERICA HAS NOT FORGOTTEN YOU

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, a friend of mine works part time in a hardware store. He is retired from several other careers, but he continues to enjoy helping people in a retail-service environment.

Recently, he kindly gave me, as we were talking about gardening, some hosta plants that he had grown. As I drove through his neighborhood looking for his house, I suspected his home was the one flying the large American flag. I knew that Mike, my friend, had served in Vietnam, but, as we spent some time digging up the plants and visiting around his garden, I learned a lot more about his harrowing experience as a marine.

You see, Mr. Speaker, Mike's squad was assigned to protect an area in the northern part of south Vietnam. They were a pesky bunch, as Mike put it, and the north Vietnamese grew tired of the constant haranguing, so they launched a counterassault. Mike's squad was outnumbered 10 to 1, and they were hit pretty hard. A call went out for help, but the first helicopter to arrive was blown apart.

Mike sustained severe wounds. A bullet to the chest collapsed his lung, shrapnel tore through a foot and a leg, and another bullet grazed his head. To breathe, Mike had to keep clearing his throat with his finger to remove the gurgling blood. And at the point where he could no longer physically fight, he crawled to a slightly more secure place and propped himself up on a sack. Mike told me he remembered two things—the wind blowing through his hair and his mother. Who would tell her that he had died?

Only three Americans survived that battle. Fortunately, another helicopter quickly landed and a corpsman came to Mike's rescue, stabilized him, and helped return him to safety. A doctor performed quick and precision surgery, and the medical personnel nursed him back to health, for which Mike was always grateful.

But something always nagged him. He never got a chance to thank the corpsman who risked his own life to save him. And, finally, in 2001, he went online, did some research, and found the man 30 years later. Mike wrote to him and said: I have not forgotten you.